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Selected Speeches and News Releases

March 22 - March 29, 1990

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THIS WEEK’S HONEY-LOAN REPAYMENT LEVELS UNCHANGED

WASHINGTON, March 22—Producers may repay their 1989 honey price-support loans at the following levels, according to Keith D. Bjerke, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Commodity Credit Corporation:

Weekly Honey-loan Repayment Levels, color and class, cents per pound, 1989 crop Table

White	40.0
Extra-light Amber	37.0
Light Amber	36.0
Amber	35.0
Nontable	33.0

The levels are unchanged from those announced April 20, 1989. Producers who redeem their honey pledged as loan collateral by repaying their 1989 honey-price support loans at these levels may not repledge the same honey as collateral for another loan.

Jane K. Phillips (202) 447-7601 8:00 am-4:30 pm EST
John C. Ryan (202) 447-8207 4:30 pm-5:30 pm EST

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“YOUTH AT RISK” SUBJECT OF ANNUAL YOUTH AND ADULT CONFERENCE

WASHINGTON, March 22—More than 300 young people and adults will exchange viewpoints on “Youth At Risk,” April 1-7, and help chart future directions for the nationwide Cooperative Extension System and its 4-H youth program. Delegates meeting here to take part in the 60th National 4-H Conference will represent over 5 million 4-H youth and more than 640,000 4-H volunteer leaders.

The conference centers around this year's theme—"Youth: The American Agenda." Delegates will include teenage 4-H members, adult volunteer leaders, and Cooperative Extension System staff members from 44 states and Puerto Rico. Ten delegates from Canada will take part as a 4-H international exchange activity.

Most of the delegates will meet in four consulting groups to discuss topics identified with the Youth At Risk National Initiative of the Cooperative Extension System. Topics include: creating more positive options for today's youth; planning new ways to enhance family communications; exploring potential values of youth service; and how to form successful partnerships. Each group's recommendations, with emphasis on roles for youth, will be presented on Friday, April 6.

A fifth group of youth will be trained as new Ambassadors, to speak for 4-H with many publics, including groups and organizations. They will present communication-related recommendations.

Jon Irby, director of this year's conference, and a national program leader with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Extension Service, said these recommendations will be studied closely at USDA, and by a policy-setting group of the nationwide Extension System and the land-grant universities.

A highlight of the conference, "4-H Day on Capitol Hill," will occur on April 4, when the U.S. delegates will report on extension at their home state congressional offices.

"After the conference ends," Irby said, "4-H members and Extension leaders will return to their communities and discuss the work they did, their recommendations on critical issues, and what conference results can mean to local groups and individuals."

The National 4-H Conference will be held at the National 4-H Center, 7100 Connecticut Ave., Chevy Chase, Md. The annual meeting is conducted by USDA's Extension Service in cooperation with the Cooperative Extension System of the nation's land-grant universities, and the support of the National 4-H Council.

Stuart Sutherland (202) 447-4653

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE
FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, March 22—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, March 23, through midnight Thursday, March 29.

Since the adjusted world price (AWP) is above the 1988 and 1989 crop base quality loan rates of 51.80 and 50.00 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1988 and 1989 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates for the specific quality and location.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments are not available for 1989-crop upland cotton sold during this period.

Based on data for the week ending March 22, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

Northern Europe Price	79.38
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	13.02
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	2.20
Average U.S. location	0.39
Sum of Adjustments	<u>-15.61</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	63.77 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

Northern Europe Price	79.38
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price	<u>-75.32</u>
	4.06
Adjustment to SLM 1-inch cotton	<u>-4.75</u>
	-0.69
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0 cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on Thursday, March 29.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

Charles Hobbs (202) 447-4026

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USDA PROPOSES 1990 COTTON CLASSING FEES

WASHINGTON, March 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing that fees charged cotton producers for manual and high-volume instrument (HVI) classification of cotton be unchanged from 1989, but that fees for certain other cotton classification and testing services be raised.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said anticipated increased volume of cotton to be classed this coming year is expected to offset projected rises in costs normally causing most classing fee increases.

The fees are set by a formula stipulated in the Uniform Cotton Classing Fees Act of 1987. Elements of the formula are estimated crop size, the rate of inflation and the operating reserve fund of AMS's Cotton Division, Haley said.

The fees proposed to continue are \$1.23 per bale for manual classing and \$1.73 per bale for HVI classing.

Also to continue unchanged is the five cents per bale discount offered to grower-agents who voluntarily provide centralized billing and collection services, Haley said.

USDA proposes certain other cotton services fee increases, among them fiber and processing testing. These increases are necessary because of higher costs of rent and utilities, and mandated salary rises, and are not covered by the Uniform Cotton Classing Fees Act of 1987. Fees for these services must reflect the full cost to AMS of providing their service.

The proposed fee schedule will be published as a proposed rule in today's Federal Register. Copies of the proposed rule are available from Ronald H. Read, Cotton Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2641-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, telephone (202) 447-2145.

Comments should be sent to Read postmarked no later than April 9.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

#

COMMENTS SOUGHT ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO DAIRY PROMOTION AND RESEARCH ORDER

WASHINGTON, March 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is requesting public comments on a proposal to establish a review procedure for state and regional dairy promotion and research programs denied eligibility to receive funds under the national dairy promotion program.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the federal Dairy Promotion and Research Order authorizes USDA to determine whether state and regional programs are qualified to receive funds from assessments on milk sales.

Research and promotion funds come from a 15-cent assessment per hundredweight of milk on dairy producers under the national program, up to 10 cents of which may be contributed to qualified state and regional dairy promotion groups.

Haley said USDA could deny eligibility for state and regional dairy promotion programs on several grounds, including engaging in activities other than promotion, research and nutrition education. USDA has not had to resort to such denials for qualified programs, he said.

If adopted, USDA's review procedure would permit an affected state or regional dairy program to petition the secretary of agriculture for a review of any proposed denial of eligibility to receive national dairy research and promotion monies, Haley said.

The federal Dairy Promotion and Research Order is authorized by the Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983. If adopted, the proposal for a review procedure would amend this order, Haley said.

The proposal will be published as a proposed rule in the March 26 Federal Register. Comments, postmarked no later than April 25, may be sent to the Dairy Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2968-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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AUSMAN TAKES OFFICE AS FMHA ADMINISTRATOR

WASHINGTON, March 23—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today swore in La Verne Ausman as the 14th administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farmers Home Administration. Ausman was nominated for the post by President Bush in November 1989, and was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on March 9.

Ausman will oversee policy development and management of all FmHA operations, which provide a wide range of credit and development assistance to farmers and rural communities. FmHA programs include loan, loan guarantee and grant programs that support the acquisition of farms by qualified borrowers, the operation of existing farms, construction of rural housing and community facilities, and development of small businesses in targeted rural areas.

Yeutter said Ausman brings to his new position a valuable combination of experience, as both a successful farmer and a leader in agricultural policymaking at the state and national levels. Ausman served as deputy under secretary of agriculture for small community and rural development from April 1987 to April 1989. He first joined USDA in May 1986 as director of intergovernmental affairs.

Prior to his federal service, Ausman was Wisconsin secretary of agriculture, trade and consumer protection from 1981 to 1986. His other public service includes two years as commissioner with the Wisconsin Labor and Industry Review Commission, and four years as a state representative in the Wisconsin legislature. Wis., dairy and beef cattle farm, which has been owned continuously by the Ausman family since 1860. Today, the Ausmans' son, John, manages the farm's operation.

Ausman has served as president of the Dunn County, Wis., Farm Bureau, the Tri-State Breeders Cooperative, and the Midwest Association of State Departments of Agriculture. He has also been a board member of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau and chairman of the Wisconsin State Board of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. As an officer in the Mid-America International Agri-Trade Council, he led a number of trade development missions to Europe and Asia.

Ausman and his wife have been active 4-H Club leaders for 25 years. Among Ausman's many awards are the 4-H Alumni Award, the Future Farmers of America Blue and Gold Award, an Honorary State FFA Degree, and a Distinguished Agriculturalist Award from the University of

Wisconsin. He is also a Distinguished Service Member of the Alpha Gamma Rho national agricultural fraternity.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623

#

USDA AGRIBUSINESS MISSION TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

WASHINGTON, March 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking U.S. agribusiness entrepreneurs who want to participate in a business opportunity mission to the Dominican Republic on June 17-23.

Duane Acker, administrator of USDA's Office of International Cooperation and Development said, "The purpose of the mission is to bring together U.S. and Dominican entrepreneurs who can mutually benefit from joint business ventures. There are many investment opportunities available in the Dominican Republic and other Caribbean Basin Initiative countries. We seek to 'match' companies with similar interests."

Several established Dominican companies that have been producing and marketing products for their local market for more than three years are looking for U.S. partners.

Their products include natural rubber and adhesives, fresh tropical fruits, processed juices, oregano, tubers, Chinese vegetables, cut flowers, semi-processed hot peppers, processed meat, cashew nuts, avocados, and cantaloupes.

USDA encourages CBI countries to produce nontraditional fruits and vegetables which do not directly compete with U.S. farm products.

This investment and trade mission is being arranged in collaboration with the Dominican Republics' Joint Agribusiness Coinvestment Council.

Participants are responsible for their travel, lodging, and meal costs. Selection of companies, scheduling of appointments and side trips will be made by OICD.

For further information, contact Maria Nemeth-Ek, (202) 653-7873, or Fax (202) 653-7724.

Jane M. Leo (202) 653-9314

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USDA PROPOSES REVISING U.S. CORN AND SORGHUM STANDARDS

WASHINGTON, March 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service today proposed discontinuing mandatory reporting of the individual components broken corn (BC), broken kernels (BN), and foreign material (FM) for nonexport inspections of corn and sorghum,

David Galliard, acting FGIS administrator, said the agency will continue to generate market data on the individual components through its monitoring program, and that, to satisfy current market information needs, the information would be available upon request. Galliard said the monitoring program will provide sufficient data to evaluate the market and the economic implications of establishing separate grade limits for the individual components.

Notice of this proposed rule will be published today in the Federal Register. Comments must be submitted in writing on or before May 22 to Paul D. Marsden, USDA, FGIS, Room 0628 South Building, Box 96454, Washington, D.C. 20090-6454. Telecopier users may send responses to FGIS' automatic telecopier machine at (202) 447-4628.

Allen A. Atwood (202) 475-3367

#

USDA PROPOSES INCREASES IN PORK ORDER IMPORT ASSESSMENTS

WASHINGTON, March 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to increase assessments on imported pork and pork products by one-hundredth of a cent per pound, or the equivalent of two-hundredths of a cent per kilogram.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the proposed upward adjustment reflects the 1-percent increase in hog prices paid at major U.S. markets this past year. The assessment adjustment is authorized by the Pork Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act of 1985, he said. The rate of assessment, one-quarter of one percent of market price, remains unchanged.

"Assessments on imported pork and pork products are established by formula each year, based on U.S. market prices for hogs," Haley said.

“This proposed change will bring importer assessments more in line with those being paid by domestic producers.”

The proposed changes will appear as a proposed rule in the March 26 Federal Register. Comments, postmarked no later than April 25, may be sent to Ralph L. Tapp, Chief, Marketing Programs and Procurement Branch, Livestock and Seed Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2610-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. Copies of the proposed rule and additional information are available from Tapp, telephone (202) 447-2650.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

#

YEUTTER OUTLINES ADMINISTRATION'S FOOD AID FARM BILL PROPOSALS

WASHINGTON, March 23—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today announced the administration's 1990 Farm Bill recommendations on food aid programs. “The United States has a long history of generous food aid and we intend to have that tradition continue,” Yeutter said.

“By the turn of the century there will be 6 billion people living outside the borders of the United States and many of them will be living in developing countries. In addition to the humanitarian aspects of food aid, we can assist those countries in developing their economies, and in turn they may become commercial markets for American agriculture one day,” Yeutter said.

Yeutter said the proposal will make our current programs more efficient and effective in achieving the four goals— humanitarian aid, economic development, trade and market development and promotion of the foreign policy of the United States— of our food aid programs. The three food aid programs likely to be considered during the farm bill debate are: Food for Peace Program or P.L. 480, which provides 6 to 8 million tons of commodities to developing countries each year; Food for Progress, which authorizes both credit sales and donations to encourage developing countries in their efforts to establish private sector economies; and Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, which authorizes additional donations of surplus commodities owned by the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) of USDA. Highlights of the proposal follow:

Food for Peace or P.L. 480

- Issue: Currently Title I of P.L. 480 authorizes long-term credit sales of U.S. agricultural commodities, but it has no grant component. The commodities are sold to the recipient country with repayment to be made to the U.S. government in U.S. dollars. Increasing concern over the debt burden facing the poorer developing countries suggests the need for expanded grant authority within U.S. food aid programs. Currently, Title III provides for grants in the P.L. 480 program; however, it requires sophisticated accounting and financial systems that are lacking in most developing countries.
- Recommendation: Title I should be amended to include direct grant authority to be used at the discretion of the President for a designated list of developing countries (currently those countries with a per capita income of \$575 or less). This would permit greater participation in grant food aid programs, particularly by the subSaharan African countries.
- Issue: Multiyear agreements are increasingly advocated by many to streamline the administrative and decision-making process. Currently, various sections of the P.L. 480 program have inconsistent authorities for multiyear agreements.
- Recommendation: Authorize multiyear food aid programs under the P.L. 480 program. These multiyear agreements will be made subject to applicable budgetary and commodity requirements.

Food for Progress

- Issue: The Food for Progress program expires September 30, 1990. This authority provides the President with a responsive food aid mechanism to encourage and support expanded private enterprise in recipient countries. Currently there is an annual ceiling of 500,000 tons of commodities and a limitation of \$30 million for CCC costs, exclusive of the costs of the commodities.
- Recommendation: The Food for Progress program should be reauthorized with the following changes: 1) tonnage limitations should be deleted, and 2) a maximum of \$50 million annually should be authorized to fund any program costs, excluding the value of CCC-held stocks. This will enable the program to be more far reaching and more responsive.

Section 416(b)

- Issue: Section 416(b) allows the CCC to donate its surplus stocks to assist needy people overseas. Costs for this program are financed by CCC rather than with P.L. 480 funds. (Such costs are usually confined to transportation expenses.) Some have advocated eliminating the provisions of Section 416(b) and channeling any surplus CCC commodities through P.L. 480 programs rather than through an additional program. However, Section 416(b) has been critical to quick responses to unforeseen and immediate needs such as those recently presented in Eastern Europe.
- Recommendation: The separate authority in Section 416(b) which permits CCC to donate its surplus stocks to assist needy people overseas should be continued. Minimum tonnage requirements should be eliminated.

“These changes will provide the administration with the flexibility needed to provide food aid around the world at a time when events in Eastern Europe and elsewhere are unfolding with unprecedented rapidity,” Yeutter said.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623

#

USDA RECOMMENDS CAROLINA FEDERAL MILK MARKETING ORDER

WASHINGTON, March 26—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is recommending establishment of a federal milk marketing order to cover North Carolina and South Carolina.

“The recommendation is based on a review of a hearing held at the request of ten cooperative associations which represent approximately 90 percent of the milk producers associated with the Carolina market,” said Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service.

The hearing was held April 17-25, 1989, in Charlotte, N.C., and reopened Aug. 22, 1989, in Alexandria, Va.

The recommendation for the order would have to be approved in a producer referendum before it could be put in effect, Haley said.

Haley said the order is necessary to ensure an adequate supply of milk for consumers in both states and to set minimum prices milk handlers (bottlers) must pay dairy farmers for milk.

The primary milk consumption areas in the two states include Charlotte, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Raleigh, Durham, Asheville, and Fayetteville in North Carolina, and Columbia, Charleston, and Greenville in South Carolina.

Haley said the federal marketing order would resolve milk supply problems in these states. North Carolina regulates its milk production under a state order; and South Carolina has no milk marketing regulations. A federal order will match supply and demand for the entire area, with special circumstances spelled out to deal with uses of milk in oversupply, and to encourage delivery of milk to bottling plants in undersupply, as in other federal milk marketing orders.

The new order would install principles common to other orders. Its major provisions would:

- adopt a three-class system of payments for milk, according to how it is used, with milk sold for drinking (Class I) getting the highest price, milk sold for soft milk products (Class II) getting a lower price, and that sold for hard milk products like butter, hard cheese and dried milk (Class III) the lowest price;

- establish pooling standards for the plants in the order, stipulating how much milk must be shipped to or received by these plants for them and the farmers supplying them to qualify for the benefits of regulation under the order;

- set minimum prices regulated handlers must pay for milk used in each class;

- compute uniform prices regulated handlers must pay dairy farmers under market-wide pooling, the process whereby farmers' receipts reflect an averaging of prices paid for all uses of milk in the entire marketing order area;

- establish a "base-excess" plan, whereby production in months of average or short supply would be used in setting a monthly base, and whereby prices in the other months of heavier production for milk in excess of the base could vary downwards. This plan would encourage farmers to level out their production throughout the year, thus minimizing disposal problems caused by seasonal oversupply.

The order also would establish payment procedures to be followed by

regulated handlers; and, as in all federal orders, it would cover the cost of administering the order with a monthly assessment of milk handlers. In this case, handlers would be assessed not more than five cents per hundredweight of the milk they purchase under the order.

The new order would adjust milk prices for butterfat content, as in most federal milk orders. It would not use a multiple component basis (considering both butterfat and nonfat solids) to set Class II and Class III prices.

Federal milk marketing orders do not set retail prices consumers pay for milk, Haley said. However, the orders affect consumers by assuring a balance between supply and demand for milk, he said.

Notice of the recommendation will be published in the March 28 Federal Register. Copies may be obtained from the Dairy Division, Order Formulation Branch, USDA, AMS, Rm. 2968-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, telephone (202) 447-6273.

Comments, postmarked or courier dated no later than April 27, should be sent to the Hearing Clerk, Rm. 1083-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250, where they will be available for public inspection after April 30.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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U.S. TO DONATE SORGHUM FOR USE IN MEXICO

WASHINGTON, March 26—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has signed an agreement with World SHARE, a private U.S. voluntary organization, to provide about 45,000 metric tons of U.S. sorghum for use in Mexico, according to Christopher Goldthwait, acting general sales manager of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service.

The \$3.8 million donation will be sold to the Mexican private sector; the proceeds will be used to provide food assistance to the needy, support program management and developmental activities. This program will reach as many as 156,000 participants in food-for-work and maternal-child health projects. The supply period is fiscal year 1990.

The donation was made under Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, which authorizes the donation of surplus commodities owned by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation to needy people overseas. The program is carried out by the Agency for International Development, acting as the agent of CCC.

For more information, contact James F. Keefer, Foreign Agricultural Service, (202) 382-9263.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

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WIND EROSION SETS DAMAGE RECORD FOR NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS

WASHINGTON, March 26—Wind erosion has damaged nearly 5 million acres in the Great Plains since November 1989, the second highest figure on record for this time of year, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

“We’re seeing the continued effects of several years of drought,” said Manly Wilder, associate chief of USDA’s Soil Conservation Service. “There’s not enough vegetative cover, and this year, there’s also not been much snow cover in a lot of places.”

The greatest damage was in North Dakota, with a state record of 1.6 million acres damaged—about a third of the total reported for 541 counties in the ten Great Plains states. This also set a record for the northern Great Plains states, with nearly 3.2 million acres damaged. The least damage was in Oklahoma, with 68,250 acres reported.

Only in the 1954-55 season was land damage higher for the Great Plains states for the November-February period, Wilder said. The wind erosion season extends from November through May.

Nearly 90 percent of the total land damaged was cropland, with the rest mostly rangeland.

Farmers used emergency tillage to prevent land damage on 716,500 acres. This compares with 1 million acres treated last year at this time. When there is enough moisture, this practice of roughening the surface helps control wind erosion. Texas, with 570,000 acres, accounted for 80 percent of the total.

Land reported in condition to blow is nearly 20.2 million acres, about 2.4 million acres less than last year and the third highest on record. North Dakota reported nearly 6 million acres—a record for the second year in a row—and Texas reported 3.7 million acres. Low soil moisture and limited snow cover have been the most prominent factors contributing to this hazardous condition.

	Counties Reporting	Acres Damaged	
		Nov.-Feb. 1990	Nov.-Feb. 1989
Montana	40	888,595	1,393,625
Nebraska	21	87,550	81,180
North Dakota	53	1,603,276	474,200
South Dakota	66	234,190	407,980
Wyoming	23	379,113	474,863
SUBTOTAL		3,192,724	2,831,848
Colorado	37	263,890	154,550
Kansas	105	161,840	520,905
New Mexico	19	88,290	54,600
Oklahoma	30	68,250	85,565
Texas	147	1,152,185	1,047,791
SUBTOTAL		1,734,455	1,863,411
TOTAL	541	4,927,179	4,695,259

Diana Morse (202) 447-4772

#

WATER SUPPLY OUTLOOK MIXED IN THE WEST

WASHINGTON, March 26—The water supply outlook is average or better in much of the Northwest, but below average almost everywhere else in the West, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

“We could have used more moisture in the form of snow for the coming growing season,” said Manly Wilder, associate chief of USDA’s Soil Conservation Service. “But farmers and ranchers need to be prepared as best they can to deal with expected shortages.”

Streamflows are forecast at average to above average for most of Washington and Montana, northwestern Oregon, northern Idaho and Wyoming, northeastern New Mexico and southeastern British Columbia. The remainder of the West, however, is forecast to receive below-to well-below-average streamflows.

Spring and summer streamflow forecasts mirrored snowpack conditions. Near-to above-average streamflows are forecast for most of the Missouri River Basin, the northern portion of the Columbia River Basin and the

southwest corner of the Arkansas River Basin.

The most dramatic changes during February took place in Washington, southeastern British Columbia and northwestern Oregon, where well-below and below-average snowpacks improved to near- and above-average snowpacks.

Precipitation was near to well-below average for most of the West during February. Precipitation amounts of 120 percent of average and greater were reported in western Washington, northwestern Oregon, southeastern Colorado and Wyoming, northeastern New Mexico, central Utah, west-central Arizona, east-central Nevada, southeastern British Columbia and southern Alaska. Most of Montana and California, eastern Washington and Oregon, southern Idaho, western Wyoming, southwestern New Mexico and northern Alaska received less than 80 percent of average precipitation during February.

Reservoir storage on the last day of February was near average for most of the Western states. New Mexico was the only state with well-above average reservoir storage. Nevada and Arizona reported the lowest percentages, at 32 percent and 61 percent of average, respectively.

The Western states depend on snowmelt for about 75 percent of their water supply. SCS and the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Weather Service jointly analyze snow and precipitation data and forecast seasonal runoff.

State-by-state outlooks:

ALASKA—Record-setting snowfall in the south-central part of the state continued through February. At least half the region is reporting the highest snowpack measurements recorded for the last 30 years. The snowpack tapers off rapidly north of the Yukon River. The Brooks Range and North Slope have record to near-record minimum snowcover. The breakup season looms even more ominous with heavy snow, frozen ground, and several thin but dark layers of ash from Mt. Redoubt to accelerate melting.

ARIZONA—Even though precipitation was above average during February, the outlook calls for below-average water supplies. March 1 data shows wellbelow-normal snowpacks in all areas except the Verde River Basin, where snowpack is average for the date. Runoff forecasts for March to May range from 12 percent to 48 percent of average on major streams. Reservoirs in central Arizona have below-average storage,

while reservoirs on the Colorado River are near average. Streamflow in the state during February was below average.

CALIFORNIA—The water supply outlook continues to be much below average. Seasonal precipitation statewide is about 60 percent of average. The Sierra Nevada snowpack, which is the major source of the state's water supply, is much below average. Streamflow volumes to date are about 33 percent of average statewide. Expected streamflow volumes are about 50 percent of average throughout the state. The driest area continues to be the central coast and the Tulare Lake Basin.

COLORADO—The state continues to face short water supplies for the runoff season. Most areas will be relying on summer rainfall and supplemental streamflows from reservoir releases to assure normal crop production this summer. Reports of poor soil moisture in southern and western Colorado continue to reflect the state's dry conditions.

IDAHO—Northern Idaho's snowpack remains near normal, while eastern Idaho and the Upper Snake Basin in the western part of the state are slightly below normal. Many basins in central and southern Idaho remain well-below normal. With only one more month of the snow accumulation season remaining, it is highly unlikely that the current snowpack situation can be significantly improved. Water users across much of central and southern Idaho should be prepared for water shortages this summer and should contact their local irrigation districts for more specific information.

MONTANA—Mountain precipitation varied from above average in northwest Montana to well-below average in the central and south central areas. Snowpack is above average along the northern part of the state and below average in the southwest corner. The majority of the state has near to a little-below-average snowpack. Most reservoirs have near to above-average storage except those in the southwest.

NEVADA—Snowpack conditions are below to well-below-average. Snowpack conditions have improved over the entire state from last month, except in the northeastern basins where water contents have decreased slightly. Snow water content is the highest in the Lower Colorado Basin at 90 percent of average and the lowest in the Lake Tahoe Basin at 56 percent of average. Nevada and eastern California reservoirs ranged from well-below average to slightly above average. Streamflow forecasts are below to well below average.

NEW MEXICO—Water supply conditions improved to the near-average range in the Canadian River Basin. The Sangre de Cristo mountain

tributaries of the Rio Grande Basin improved to the near-average to below-average range. The remainder of the state remains in the much-below-average range. As the end of the snowpack accumulation season approaches, prospects of conditions improving very much are not good. Severe shortages of snowmelt runoff water for irrigation are expected over much of the state.

OREGON—Water shortages can be expected in eastern Oregon this spring and summer while adequate water supplies will be available for the west side of the Cascades and Mt. Hood area. Mountain snowpack is much below normal throughout eastern Oregon and near normal or above in the headwaters of the Willamette Valley and the Mt. Hood area. February precipitation was below normal in eastern Oregon and near normal west of the Cascades. Reservoir storage is currently 88 percent of average.

UTAH—Improvements in the water supply outlook in southern Utah were more than offset by reductions in northern Utah projections. Reservoir storage is slightly better but still below average. March storms will have to yield two to three times normal additional snow water and temperatures will have to be near normal if an average snow year is to be salvaged this season.

WASHINGTON—For the second month, the snowpack improved over the entire state and varied from 84 percent of normal in the Walla Walla Basin to 112 percent in the Cowlitz-Lewis Basin. SNOTEL sites averaged 107 percent of normal on March 1 statewide. Reservoir storage is good throughout the state, with the reservoirs in the Yakima Basin at 92 percent and most of the rest showing over 100 percent of average. February precipitation was high in western areas of Washington, and averaged 114 percent statewide. February precipitation varied from 69 percent of average in the Walla Walla area to 149 percent in the North Puget.

WYOMING—Streamflow prospects look good for water users in the northern part of the state where flows are expected to be slightly above to just below-average during the spring and summer months. Users in the Sweetwater, tributaries to the Platte below Pathfinder, the Upper Bear River and Hams Fork will see flows that are much below average. The March 1 snowpack was near average in the northern third of the state, while the remaining two-thirds of the state is below average by 10 to 35 percent. Reservoir storage mirrors the snowpack picture with storage in

the northern part of the state being near to above-average and in the central and southern parts being below average.

Diana Morse (202) 447-4772

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FARM RESEARCH KEY TO COMPETITIVE ECONOMY

STONEVILLE, Miss., March 27—Food and farm research at government agencies, universities and private industry will help farmers protect the environment while keeping America strong in global trade markets, Charles Hess, assistant secretary of agriculture for science and education, said today at a news conference here.

Hess said this research cooperation “has been, and will continue to be, a powerful tool in supporting essential food and fiber production for the people of our country and the world—and in helping to keep America’s agriculture competitive and sensitive to the environment.”

The environment and economy will be further helped, he said, by the \$100 million “National Initiative for Research on Agriculture, Food, and the Environment.” The initiative is in the President’s 1991 budget and proposed farm bill legislation.

Hess spoke during a visit to Stoneville Pedigreed Seed Co.

As an example of research benefits, Hess said \$41 in economic activity comes from every public and private dollar spent on agricultural research in the Mississippi Delta region. He cited a report by the Delta Council, which promotes the region’s economic development.

He said the Delta economy could get a further boost soon from U.S. Department of Agriculture research—much of it in cooperation with universities and industry—now going on in Stoneville at the Jamie Whitten Delta States Research Center, operated by USDA’s Agricultural Research Service.

Among the promising ARS projects he cited:

—A 100-square-mile field test near Leland, Miss., starting in three weeks, that will see if a natural virus can suppress two of cotton’s worst insect pests as they live among weeds outside crop fields this spring. If it can, this could reduce the insects’ threat to the crop after it is planted. Several other federal, state and private groups including the Delta Council are cooperating in the test.

—Cotton research to reduce insect pests, strengthen cotton fiber and improve ginning technology and machinery.

—Reduced use of pesticides that could result from refining the agency's experimental spray nozzles for low-volume application of chemicals. A private firm and ARS scientists are working together on this project.

—Genetics research aimed at improving the economics of catfish production, a growing business in the area.

Agriculture today is being challenged to operate in an environmentally responsible fashion, Hess said. "Fortunately, we can look to our newest agricultural tool, biotechnology, to be extremely useful in helping the United States remain competitive in the global marketplace and sensitive in the environmental area."

One promising area of biotechnology aims at transferring new genes into plants. Hess said this "can create plants which are genetically resistant to insects and disease and thus will require fewer chemicals to protect them."

He said Calgene Inc., a biotechnology firm that owns the Stoneville seed firm, has engineered two new cotton plants, one with insect resistance and one that apparently "can be kept weed-free by a relatively benign chemical."

Jim De Quattro (301) 344-4296

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PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR ECUADOR

WASHINGTON, March 26—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 105,093 metric tons of wheat for delivery to Ecuador. Of the total, 70,062 tons of hard red spring is for delivery during the 1989-90 marketing year and 35,031 tons of hard red winter is for delivery during the 1990-91 marketing year.

The marketing year for wheat begins June 1.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

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FOUR MORE STATES JOIN PSEUDORABIES FIGHT

WASHINGTON, March 27—Four more states—North Dakota, Oklahoma, Virginia and Wyoming—have joined the fight to wipe out pseudorabies, a costly disease of swine and other livestock, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

According to James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, this brings to 21 the total of states in the five-stage state-federal-industry pseudorabies eradication program. "Stage I of the program is preparation," he said; "stage II is control; stage III is mandatory herd clean-up; and stage IV is surveillance to make sure no infection is present. A state can be declared 'pseudorabies-free'—stage V—if it goes for a year in stage IV without finding an infected swine herd."

Wyoming joins Arizona, California, Florida, Missouri and Texas in stage I; Oklahoma and Virginia are in stage II with Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan and New Mexico; and North Dakota goes to stage III with Alabama, Arkansas, Ohio, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

"Applications from Alaska, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey and North Carolina are currently being reviewed by APHIS and the National Pseudorabies Control Board, an industry organization," Glosser said. "By October, all states should be in the program. The goal is to eradicate the disease in domestic swine by the year 2000."

Pseudorabies is a contagious livestock disease that is most prevalent in swine. Although it often causes death in newborn pigs, older hogs may survive the infection and remain carriers of the virus for life. Stress or other conditions may trigger the virus from its latent state in these carrier animals. Pseudorabies, sometimes called Aujeszky's disease or "mad itch," also affects cattle, sheep, dogs, cats and other animals. In these species, it almost always causes death. Pseudorabies does not affect humans.

Glosser pointed out that a number of new tools are being considered for use in the campaign to eradicate pseudorabies, including genetically engineered vaccines that allow tests to differentiate between infected and vaccinated animals. "In past programs against other diseases, use of vaccines sometimes masked the disease and made it difficult to detect infection," he said. "But the genetically engineered vaccines will let us use vaccination as a valuable weapon in helping wipe out this disease."

Glosser said the pseudorabies eradication effort is unique in that the swine industry took the lead in developing standards for the eradication program. In essence, pork producers got together and said, "This is what we have to do to get rid of this disease," he said.

Larry Mark (202) 447-3977

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, March 27—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 9.41 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 8.46 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 8.35 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.70 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$5.81 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$5.29 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$5.10 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EST. The next scheduled price announcement will be made April 3 at 3 p.m. EDT, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-7923

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PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR UNKNOWN

WASHINGTON, March 27—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 155,600 metric tons of corn for delivery to unknown destinations, with 54,000 tons for delivery during the 1989-90 marketing year and 101,600 tons for delivery during the 1990-91 marketing year.

The marketing year for corn begins Sept. 1.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

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USDA AUTHORIZES TRISTATE TEST OF TRANSGENIC SQUASH AND CANTALOUPE

WASHINGTON, March 28—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has authorized the Upjohn Co., Kalamazoo, Mich., to field-test genetically altered squash and cantaloupe in California, Georgia and Michigan. The plants have been designed to resist cucumber mosaic virus (CMV) and papaya ringspot virus (PRV), economically significant diseases of these crops.

“We have reviewed the proposed procedures and have determined that Upjohn is following the necessary steps to assure the safety of the field tests,” said James W. Glosser, administrator for USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

These are the first field test permits issued by APHIS for genetically altered squash or cantaloupe. Last August APHIS issued a permit to a Cornell researcher for a similar study on CMV-tolerant cucumbers. Cucumber, cantaloupe and squash all belong to the same plant family and are all affected by CMV, which results in yellowing and in distortion of leaves and fruit. These defects reduce crop yield and quality.

Upjohn researchers elicited the crop disease resistance in a process that gives results similar to immunizing people against human viruses, although the mechanism of disease protection differs in plants and people. The transgenic plants are given a nonpathogenic gene from the virus, which interferes with the disease infection process and protects the plant. Like all plant viruses, CMV and PRV do not harm humans.

The tests will take place in May in Kern and San Benito Counties, Calif.; Worth County, Ga.; and Kalamazoo County, Mich. Upjohn will infect the genetically altered squash and cantaloupe with CMV and PRV under controlled conditions and monitor the plants for disease symptoms.

Current practices for controlling CMV and PRV in these crops include chemical treatments, burning off infected plants and spraying fields with low levels of the viruses to stimulate immunity. Upjohn expects the transgenic plants to offer producers a more effective method for controlling the virus.

APHIS reviews proposed experiments of genetically modified plants to examine their potential for introducing agricultural pests or for significantly affecting the environment. No pest or environmental hazards have been found to be associated with the proposed tests.

Copies of the environmental assessment are available from Linda Gordon, Room 844, USDA, APHIS, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Anita Brown (301) 436-5931

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**THIS WEEK’S HONEY-LOAN REPAYMENT LEVELS
UNCHANGED**

WASHINGTON, March 29—Producers may repay their 1989 honey price-support loans at the following levels, according to Keith D. Bjerke, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Commodity Credit Corporation:

Weekly Honey-loan Repayment Levels, color and class, cents per pound, 1989 crop Table

White	40.0
Extra-light Amber	37.0
Light Amber	36.0
Amber	35.0
Nontable	33.0

The levels are unchanged from those announced April 20, 1989. Producers who redeem their honey pledged as loan collateral by repaying

their 1989 honey-price support loans at these levels may not repledge the same honey as collateral for another loan.

Jane K. Phillips (202) 447-7601 8:00 am-4:30 pm EST

John C. Ryan (202) 447-8207 4:30 pm-5:30 pm EST

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Backgrounder

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

HONEYBEES AND BEEKEEPERS

Working Together for a Bountiful Food Supply

When we think of bees, the first thing we think of is their sting! The second thing we think of is honey. Most people never think of how bees pollinate our crops, Food Supply directly affecting American agriculture. But we tend to take for granted that this sometimes pesky insect we call the honeybee plays an invaluable role in our varied and plentiful food supply.

Foraging, Feeding—All In A Day's Work

Honeybees are known in scientific terminology as *Apis mellifera*. In a typical hive, there are three kinds of honeybees. The queen bee lays eggs and rules the hive with chemical messages called pheromones; the worker bee, a sterile female, does all the work the hive requires; and the drone, a male bee with only one function, fertilizes the queen in her first few days of life.

Worker bees gather food, primarily pollen and nectar, from flowers. As they forage from flower to flower, pollen sticks to their hairy bodies. Often, when the bees brush against petals and branches, pollen will fall into unfertilized flowers. Honeybees unintentionally pollinate more than 90 cultivated crops, with a combined annual value of billions of dollars. Honeybee pollination affects about every third mouthful of food or drink we consume. These foods include apples, almonds, blueberries, cranberries, cantaloupes, other melons, and cucumbers.

Many plants pollinated by honeybees contribute indirectly to human diets because they are important food sources for livestock and wildlife. These plants include alfalfa, clover, wild fruits, and berries. Also honeybees are important in pollinating plants needed for dune and marsh stabilization. Many insects besides honeybees can pollinate plants, but no other insect is more easily managed or relocated for specific pollination, nor does any other insect pollinate such a wide range of plants.

The Honey Bee's Sweet Namesake

Honeybees are famous for their honey. Each year, honey bees in the United States produce about 250 million pounds of honey, a byproduct valued at \$200 million. Honey bees also manufacture 4 million pounds of beeswax each year and several lesser known substances like bee pollen, bee venom, and royal jelly, which are important ingredients in a variety of products.

The Origin Of Modern Beekeeping

Beekeeping for honey and hobby originated centuries ago in Asia and Europe. When the American colonists missed honey as a sweetener, they imported honeybees from Europe to Jamestown, Va., in the 1600's. Because the American Indians had never seen bees, and did not know what bees could contribute, they simply thought the strangers had brought in a new kind of "fly." During the next 200 years, beekeeping grew steadily until honeybees became a familiar sight across North America.

As an industry, beekeeping grew dramatically during the first half of the 20th century. During World War II, when sugar was strictly rationed, managing bees for honey production gave Americans an alternative way to still have sweets and sweeteners. Beeswax was also an essential component of machine lubricants used by the military.

It was during World War II that people began to realize how important honey bees are to crop pollination. Records show that prior to World War II, the United States had 4.3 million honeybee colonies. By 1947, that number had increased 27 percent to 5.9 million colonies, the greatest number of hives in U.S. history.

Current and Future Perspectives

Today, about 250,000 beekeepers, most of them hobbyists, manage over 4 million colonies in every state of the nation. Though most honeybees are kept in rural settings, hives are often seen in backyards, on roof tops, and even on the balconies of high-rise apartments. Many home gardeners keep a few hives to pollinate their fruit trees and vegetable gardens.

The demand for commercial beekeepers—those who earn their livelihood from the sale of honey and the rental of hives for pollination—is so great that about 1,600 beekeepers literally migrate

thousands of miles each year to provide pollination services. These people are known as migratory beekeepers.

Like many other industries in the United States, the bee industry is specialized. One segment, focuses on the sale of bees (as opposed to bee products) to other commercial or hobby beekeepers. Bees are sold several thousand to a package to begin new colonies, and queen bees are sold individually for breeding purposes.

Though subtle at times, the effects of beekeeping are far-reaching. Beekeeping associations exist in all 50 states to provide knowledge exchange and new ideas for both hobbyists and commercial beekeepers. Beekeeping and honey industry meetings, from the county to international level, are held frequently. State and federal governments participate in programs to protect and preserve the health of our bees and the U.S. bee industry. Local Cooperative Extension Service offices offer a variety of beekeeping information. Also, educational materials, meeting information, and the latest research findings are routinely published in local and state bee newsletters and national beekeeping magazines.

James Tew (216) 264-3911

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